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(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): **LOUGHBOROUGH UNIVERSITY ENTERPRISES LIMITED**
[GB/GB]; Loughborough University, Admin 1 Building,
Ashby Road, Loughborough, Leicestershire LE11 3TU
(GB).

(72) Inventors; and

(75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): **HOPKINSON, Neil**
[GB/GB]; Department of Mechanical and Manufacturing
Enginee, ring, Loughborough University, Loughborough,

Leicestershire LE11 3TU (GB). **ERASENTHIRAN, Poonjotai** [MY/GB]; Department of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineer, ring, Loughborough University, Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE11 3TU (GB).

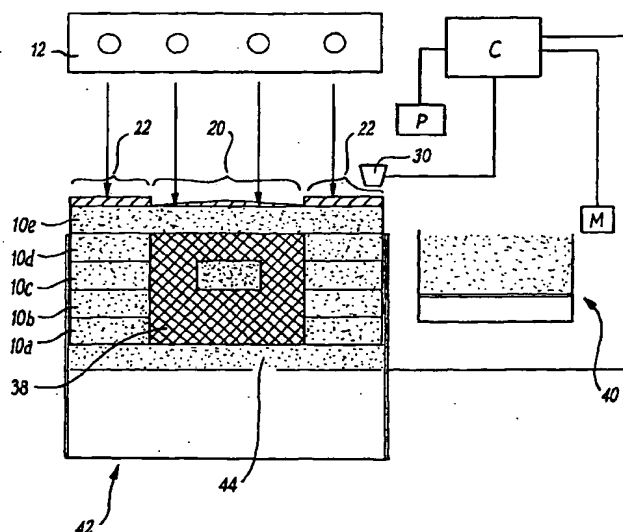
(74) Agent: **HIGGIN, Paul**; Swindell & Pearson, 48 Friar Gate, Derby DE1 1GY (GB).

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(54) Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR COMBINING PARTICULATE MATERIAL



(57) Abstract: A method of selectively combining particulate material, for example plastics material by sintering, comprises providing a layer (10) of particulate material, providing radiation, for example using a radiation source (12), over the layer (10), and varying the absorption of the provided radiation across a selected surface portion of the layer (10) to combine a portion of the material of the layer (10). The method may comprise varying radiation absorption by varying the intensity of the radiation incident on the surface portion of the layer (10), or alternatively may comprise varying the radiation absorptive properties of the particulate material over the selected surface portion of the layer (10), for example by printing a radiation absorbent material (50, Fig. 5) onto the surface portion.